

JUXTA SALICES

R. A. KNOX



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JUXTA SALICES

JUSTA SALICES

BY

R. A. KNOX

(Author of "Signa Severa")

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GENERAL DEDICATION

TO ALL

OLD ETONIANS

GOOD CHURCHMEN

AND SMOKERS OF BRIAR PIPES

PREFACE

THE first five poems in this collection (barring the Dedication) were written while the author was still at Eton, and, as no less than three of them wear the aspect of a positively last appearance, they have been called, in the words of so many eminent preachers, "Ninthlies and Lastlies." In the fifth, the reader will observe a definite promise not to write any more: this good resolution was kept for nearly a year, but up at Balliol the author got into a political set, and in June, 1907, he broke his pledge.

Of the verse, two pieces, "Death in the Pot" and "The Christchurchman's Lament," appeared in the *Cornhill Magazine*, and are reprinted by kind permission of the Editor, Mr. R. J. Smith, K.C. Similar debts of gratitude are due to the publishers of the *Oxford Magazine* for leave to publish "Megalomania" and "The Window-box," and to Messrs. Alden & Co. for "Lines to a Lady" and "Annus Mirabilis," acts of homage to *Isis*; three scurrilous Limericks found a refuge in the same hebdomadal. The fourth, fifth, and sixth poems recall the familiar atmosphere of the *Eton College Chronicle*; the second and third I have rescued—*de igne rapiens*—from the columns of the *Outsider*: for access to them I must return thanks to Messrs. Spottiswoode.

I must apologize for the intrusion of an intolerable deal of prose. But when the azure binding of Eton

days is exchanged for the dark blue horizon of Oxford, when the tongue cleaves to the roof of the mouth, and the right hand forgets her cunning, what wonder if the Muse, her strength brought down in her journey, is fain to lag behind? The four prose articles belong to a time when the author enjoyed for a term the privilege of editing the *Isis*, which he did so inefficiently that he feels sure the printer will never forget him. They naturally fall into the same class as the sister poems mentioned above. The “Decalogue Symposium”—but I can’t stop to explain about that now.

The title of this book is taken from Ps. cxxxvii.

R. A. K.

MANCHESTER,

S. Peter in Chains, 1910.

SPECIAL DEDICATION

To P. H. S. S.

PATRICK ! if this apostate tongue,
Loosed from the mouth's adhesive rafter,
Not unregretfully has sung
To Balliol's Babylonish laughter,
Slinging about, with larger freedom,
Its brickbats at the sons of Edom ;

If sometimes Oxford's term and Vac
Have given me paltrier themes to hymn on,
If somewhere my schismatic back
Has bowed in sanctuaries of Rimmon,
And songs that thrilled from Jordan's harp are
Squandered on Abana and Pharpar ;—

The fault is yours ; the fault is theirs
Who, still about our pathway flocking,
Recall our Eton joys and cares,
Our days of sapping, hours of socking ;
Who dare to flaunt their College Wall
'Neath shadows of an alien Hall.

Prodigal, turning out my sty,
I came across these empty parings ;
To you,—before we part, and I
Have lost, and you have won your Barings,—
I dedicate these husks of chatter,
(You've read them, so it does n't matter).

Oxford has given me friends to choose,
Others have sympathized at need,
Agreed more wholly with my views,—
But you, you only still succeed,
Without admonitory pokes,
In understanding all my jokes.

BALLIOL, *June, 1910.*

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NINTHLIES
AND
LASTLIES

DEATH IN THE POT

[Being a reminiscence of Mr. Upton Sinclair's Meat Scandals.]

WE need no more the poisoned dart,
 No more the laden quiver,
When Death is sold in every mart
 Beneath the guise of liver ;
Our simple faith has had its day,
 Our fond illusions totter,
And we must turn, like things of clay,
 To rail against the potter.

Thou cask with half-extracted bung,
 In whose recesses murky
I did not doubt the power of tongue
 To co-exist with turkey ;
What legend haunts about thy shape
 Unfortunately mythic
That does not warn us to escape
 Ingredients wholly Scythic ?

O whited sepulchre to see,
 O Pharisaic platter,
To think that once I held thee free
 From all exotic matter !
Two months ago, or less than that,
 I could discuss the flavour
Of beef that ill dissembled rat
 Without a single quaver.

But now with what vague fears of ill
Do Egypt's flesh-pots bristle !
For all is grist that finds their mill,
 And most of that is gristle ;
Employés, too, are good to eat,
 Who, at their latest minute,
No longer fit to dye the meat,
 Will meet their death within it.

Perhaps in this neglected pot
 Some rude forefather slumbers ;
Melpomene, bewail his lot
 In more pathetic numbers !
It is not mine their praise to tell
 In high heroic descant ;
Each laid within his narrow cell
 In pâté requiescant.

ETON, June, 1906.

A PARACLAUSITHYRON

(After ROSSETTI.)

[Arising from a Notice to the effect that "School Stores" would in future be inexorably closed at 6 p.m.]

"WHY did you shut and lock the door,
Mrs. Cl-rke, mum ?

The crowd pass by, and they hunger sore."
"Too late! they should have come before,
O Adolphus!"

*(Absolve us, Heaven, absolve us ;
Too late, too late, between six and seven !)*

"There's one that comes and knocks at the gate,
Mrs. Cl-rke, mum,

And asks for a stick of chocolate."
"Shall have the stick upon his pate,
O Adolphus!"

*(Absolve us, Heaven, absolve us ;
Rod, pole, or perch, between six and seven !)*

"He stands and shouts with all his might,
Mrs. Cl-rke, mum,

And the things he says are not polite."
"No chocolate shall he have to-night,
O Adolphus!"

*(Absolve us, Heaven, absolve us ;
To-morrow morn, between six and seven !)*

“There’s one that drives up grandly here,
 Mrs. Cl-rke, mum,
 In a 40 h.p. Napier.”

“And you and they, and him and her,
 O Adolphus !”

(*Absolve us, Heaven, absolve us ;
 What does she mean, between six and seven ?*)

“He blows his horn at the gate without,
 Mrs. Cl-rke, mum,
 And he leaves his meaning in little doubt.”
 “I care not what he has come about,
 O Adolphus !”

(*Absolve us, Heaven, absolve us ;
 She does not care, between six and seven !*)

“He has climbed again to his motor car,
 Mrs. Cl-rke, mum,
 And the carburetter is passing fair.”
 “Come hither, leave Mr. W-lls to stare,
 O Adolphus !”

(*Absolve us, Heaven, absolve us ;
 Those motor-cars, between six and seven !*)

“There’s one that cries and will not stop,
 Mrs. Cl-rke, mum ;
 He lifts his lips, and he calls out ‘Shop !’”
 “He shall not thrive, were he thrice in Pop,
 O Adolphus !”

(*Absolve us, Heaven, absolve us ;
 Check pantaloons, between six and seven !*)

“ Oh, he prays you as his soul you ’ld bless,
 Mrs. Cl-rke, mum,

To take and give him a strawberry mess.”

“ Sweet hour of my power and his distress,
 O Adolphus !”

*(Absolve us, Heaven, absolve us ;
Here’s mess enough, between six and seven !)*

“ What white thing has passed in the rain,
 Mrs. Cl-rke, mum ?

I think it flies through the window-pane.”

“ A lump of sugar, hard and plain,
 O Adolphus !”

*(Absolve us, Heaven, absolve us ;
Burst, burst, all burst, between six and seven !)*

ETON, June, 1906.

ΚΤΡΙΑ ΟΝΟΜΑΤΑ

Οἱ δὲ ἐπεὶ ἐσκόπεόν τε καὶ ἔχρισαν λίπ' ἐλαίῳ
ἰτέαν ὠλεσίκαρπον, ἢ ἀνδρῶν ὠλεσε καρπούς,
ἐν βάζοισι βάγοισιν ἐπισταμένως κατέθηκαν,
βράκον δὲ εἰσαναβάντες ἐφίζανον· αὐτὰρ ὁ Πάτρως
δεινὸν ὁμοκλήσας λευκότριχας ἥλασεν ὥππους.

ἐκ μὲν Βωλβαίων δοιῶν Πετασάγρω ἵκανον,
βωλῆρες καὶ βαττονόμοι, σταγῆρε παλαιώ·
τῶν ὁ μὲν ἦν βασιλεύς, δολίους τὸν ἀπέπεμπε συέρφους,
δεύτερος ἀνλυσέων καὶ ἀφηραγίων ὅχ' ἄριστος,
αὐτὰρ ὁ βάττησεν, καὶ κρισπότατον κνόκον ἔσχεν
ἀμφοτέροις ἵννιγξι παρ' ἀνδράσιν Οὐικαμισταῖς.

Τυφνῆλ δὲ ἐξ οἴκου Γυλιέλμων ἥλθε γελαστής,
οὐμβρελλαστάνδου περικλειτὸς κουστοδίανος,
ὅς στίχας οἰόσπερ προτέρῳ λυκαβαντίδι τηρεῖ,
βαττεῖ δὲ, εἰ δυνατόν, καὶ φέρτερον ἡὲ πάροιθεν.
εῦμορφός τὸν ἀπὸ Τηθαμίων ἥλθ' ἥλθ' Ἀκαλανθίς
ῶσπερ καὶ πέρυσιν, κρατερὸς τύπτειν καὶ ἴαλλειν,
ὅν πρώτιστον ἔθηκαν ἐν ἡμιχόροις ἐθελονταῖς
Καλλιόπη Λλοΐδός τε διάκτορος ὄργανοπαίστης.

Χρυσὸς δὲ ἐκ Πέτροιο δόμου κίεν, ὡς τὸ πάρος περ,
φαιδρωπῷ τὰ μάλιστ' ἐπιείκελος ὡν Ἰακώβῳ,
ὅς φηλδεῖν ἐκέκαστο, δρόμους θ' ἑκατὸν σὺν ἐκλάτῳ
ἄρτι κεκομπίληκε Λιφερπυδέλων ἐν ἀέθλῳ.

Γρηγόριος δ' ἄρ' ἀπ' Ἰμπήων ἔξηλθε Φίλιππος,
τὸν καὶ Θαυματόεργον ἐφίεμαι ἔξονομῆναι.
[πάντες δ' ἄφρονές εἰσι, καὶ οὐκ ὄφονται ἰωκον.]
πάντων δ' ἡρώων, οἵ ἐφ' Ἀρροφίους ἐπάγερθεν
λῷστόν τε στίλον ἔσχε, καὶ ἀτρέμας εἶχε μάλιστα.
πέμψε Λαγῶν οἶκος τότε Κούρτιδα μιλτοπάργον
δεξίτερον βωλῆρα καὶ οὐ βαττεῖν ἀδίδακτον,
ἄλλ' οὐχ οἷος ἔην ἱερὴ ἴση Γρηγορίοιο.

οὐδ' αὖ τὸν Γιβσῶνα Σομερφιλίων ἀπὸ κούρων,
εἰλίποδ', ἔξεπίτριπτον, ἀνεκβωλητέον ἔμπης,
σιγήσω, φίλον ὅντ' ἡδίτορος ὀππιδανοῖο.
Γιβσῶν', ὃς κάλλιστος ἀνὴρ ἐπὶ Κύριον ἀγρὸν
ἡλθεν Ἐτωναίων, εἰ μὴ διός γ' Ἀκαλανθίς.

πέμψε δ' ἄρα Σπρόττον, δολίων βωλῆρα τυίστων,
οἶκος Ἰουρδηλαῖος ὁ γὰρ τότε μὲν παρὰ λήγου
τὴν σφαῖραν ἔβαλεν, τότε δ' ἐμβράκουσαν ἀπ' ὄφφου
καὶ μεγάλην στάσιν ἔσχε μεθ' ὀπλοτέρου Πετασάγρου
ἐβδομάδι προτέρη, καὶ ἐδίδολεδεν Οὐικαμιστάς.
ἡλθε δ' ἀπὸ Βρώκων νοστήσας ἄρτι Ναύλωρ,
ὅς τε πολὺ πρώτιστος ἀγρευέμεναι σκύτος ἦεν
ἡμὲν ἐπὶ τρίτῳ ἀνδρὶ καὶ ἐν λειμῶνι βαθίστῳ.
αὐτὰρ Ἀλέξανδρος παρὰ δώματος Οὐέλλσοιο
ἡλθε Λύων· τοῖσιν δὲ φαείνοι πότνια Νίκη.

καὶ σὺ μὲν οῦτω χαῖρε, φιλὴ διὰ παντὸς Ἐτώνη·
ἔξ γὰρ ἔτη πεφίληκα, καὶ εἰς ἑκατόν σε φιλήσω,
σῆς κουροτροφίης καὶ ἀγαυῶν εἴνεχ' ἔταιρων·
καὶ τὰ μὲν ἥνδανε πάντα· τὰ νῦν δ' ἀποβήμεναι ὥρη,
πολλοὶ γὰρ νεμεσίζονται πολλοὶ δ' ἀμελοῦσιν

οἱ τὸ πρὸν φιλέοντες· ἐγὼ δὲ ἐσ πάντας ἀμύμων·
 οὐδέν τοι ἔκῶν ἀδίκησα τὸν οὐκ ἀδικοῦντα καὶ αὐτόν,
 καὶ πολλοὺς παύροισιν ἀπεχθόμενος πεφίληκα.
 χαῖρε Θεοῦ μῆτερ καὶ Νικόλεω πολύεργε,
 χαῖροις δὲ Ἐνρίκου ψυχὴ καὶ πότνι Ἐιώνη·
 ὁ προγόνοισι μάκαιρα, καὶ ἀνδράσιν, οὐσπερ ἔτικτες,
 ἡμεῖς μὲν κατὰ γαῖαν ἀλώμεθα πολλὰ μογοῦντες,
 ἡμεῖς μὲν φθινόμεσθα, σὺ δὲ αὐξάνει, ὡς τὸ πάρος περ·
 αὐτὰρ ἐγὼ καὶ σεῖο καὶ ἄλλης μνήσομεν ἀοιδῆς,
 ὡς κύκνος, θνήσκων περ, ἐφυμνήσας τὰ κράτιστα.

ETON, July 12th, 1906.

LITTLE VICTIMS

As I wander dejected to look at the people elected,
Musing the while on the crowd now irretrievably
ploughed,
How consoling I find it to think how little they 'd
mind it,
If the refused ones knew what they escape going
through !
Poor little helpless wretches the watchful pedagogue
fetches
Up to the meagre hotel where they are destined to
dwell :
Or who, strangely accoutred, accompany him who has
tutored
Tongues that hardly can speak into a knowledge of
Greek !
There in hay-harvest weather they sit by fifties
together,
Inconsolably sit under the statue of Pitt—
All for what ? For a pittance, whose regular annual
quittance
Has, I suppose, no zest but for their people at
best ;
All for a cumbrous guerdon, distinctly akin to a
burden,
Weighing the shoulders down, known to the world
as a Gown :

All for Remove to hustle, as out through the passage
they bustle,
All for the dirtiest scug loudly to designate "Tug!"
All to sit in a bully, in raiment ragged and woolly,
On their knees on the ball under a blasphemous
Wall ;
All to compete for prizes of various labour and sizes,
Which, however they sweat, Oppidans probably get ;
All to live in a warren, with practices utterly foreign,
Customs skilfully furled up from the rest of the
world,
All to court a seclusion, in which, for fear of confusion,
Oppidans none may know till they are ready to go ;
All to be always reckoned incontrovertibly second,
Never, wherever they be, rise to the top of the tree—
This, just this, is the meaning of all that boast over-
weening
Which you can hardly resist when you appear on
the list.
Thus I muse like a sceptic, adopting a slightly
dyspeptic
View of the state of affairs as to a Colleger's cares ;
Yes, I am poor as a scoffer ; and if you gave me the
offer
Six more years to remain—well, I would do it again.

ETON, *Elections, 1907.*

A HUMOROUS VALE

AT last I stop the oaten quill,
I twitch my mantle blue,
And turn again on Windsor Hill
To bid the land adieu ;
Yet 'tis not only stones and trees
That fancy lingers on,
For they will live in changeless ease
When I am dead and gone.

Masters, farewell ! Yet, when I come,
You will be here to know.
Farewell, my friends ! Yet surely some
Will follow where I go.
Masters and friends are not the care
That racks the anguished mind ;
One numbing thought alone is there—
I leave myself behind.

Farewell, old self ! For you at least
Some change must undergo ;
The form that year by year increased,
The mind that seemed to grow ;
The careless brow, the hairless cheek,
The unclouded eye,
The candid tongue that dared to speak
Before it dared to lie.

No more amid the scent of rose
To tell my numbers o'er
In gardens where the water flows
Along a flowery shore !
No more to see my pages turned,
To hear my verses read,
To feel the blush of praise unearned
And thankfulness unsaid !

Upon the willows, lone and drear,
By Isis' banks that spring,
The harp that Thames rejoiced to hear
Shall hush her jocund string ;
Or, if the alien children still
Desire a song of glee,
In every thoughtless word shall thrill
A heart that breaks for thee.

ETON, *July 26, 1906.*

ON A GREAT RETIREMENT*

CLERK in Scholastic Orders ! Can I deem
 Thy last roll called, thy final victim beaten,
 Thou passest from thy glory, who didst seem
 The most unaged in all unaging Eton ?

Oft, like a good Praepostor, have I pounced
 On weekly truants, trembling for thy summons—
 First asked thee how the Thackeray they pronounced
 Their names and titles (and they did seem
 rum 'uns),

Then haled them from the labyrinthine suite
 Of Science, where they half forgot their panics,
 Or, lurking violets, from the coy retreat
 That still usurps your sacred name, Mechanics.

And shall another take the Absence bill
 From anxious masters, dreading his *εὐθύνη*?
 Another skulk behind th' unanswering grille,
 And be extreme to mark the list's lacunae ?

And can it be another form shall stand
 Amid the culprits, where they wait gazetted ;
 Half Charon, piloting his ghastly band,
 Half Moses in the dark gap silhouetted ?

* That of Gaffney, the School Clerk of Eton.

Eton shall miss thee, though another eye
Thy wit, thy care, thy watchfulness inherit;
Henry shall miss thee, where he points on high
His sceptre to the Heaven he dared to merit:

And one poor exile, when, restored awhile,
He haunts these precincts, anciently thy bear-
ward,
Will miss the eye that ne'er refused a smile,
The hand that ne'er disdained to journey hair-
ward.

ETON, *July, 1910.*

BOWINGS
TO
RIMMON

C

THE CHRISTCHURCHMAN'S LAMENT

[Being some account of the motives which induced certain gentlemen to set fire to the Stand designed for the Oxford Pageant of 1907.]

(With occasional apologies to MATTHEW ARNOLD.)

THE CHRISTCHURCHMAN *loquitur* :—

How changed is every spot man makes, or unmakes !

In Northern Oxford nothing keeps the same,
And here, in Christ Church meadows, where the sun
makes

The Cher in summer worthy of its name,
A mushroom growth, raised by a local agent,
A mighty platform threatens the display
Which uninstructed people call a pageant
(Though that, I think, is not the proper way).

Ladies, that punt beneath the cool-haired creepers,
Each clutching her inviolable shade,
Fail to observe the customary reapers
Stand with suspended scythe in yonder glade ;
Women they see, their hands upraised in cursing,
Like Suffragists, beneath the eye of Heaven,
And these, they know, are characters rehearsing
The culminating scene in Tableau VII.

Bumpkins, that came to hear the choir-boys carol
 From Magdalen Tower on May-day, stood and
 roared
 To see strange men in latter-day apparel
 March with umbrellas o'er the trampled sward :
 Perhaps those serried companies presented
 The loyal muster of King Charles's men,
 Perhaps, how undergraduates frequented
 Lectures—ah yes ! they still had lectures then.

Fain had I lived when Aelfred burnt the crumpets,
 Ere Oxford knew the guile that haunts the gown,
 Or when the sudden blare of Roundhead trumpets
 Would send a proctor flying round the town ;
 Or when the Magdalen fellows, rusticated,
 Begged their precarious bread o'er lawn and lea,
 Then, harmless Indolence was never “gated,”—
 But Time, not Indolence, has done for me.

Come, cross, my friends, the unpermitted ferry ;
 Soon from the High will firemen's pumps come on ;
 Soon we shall have the Oxford coster merry
 Charging us, here a bobby, there a don ;
 Achilles in his tent, the pageant-master
 Shall see young Hectors raising brands on high,
 And cease his boding presage of disaster.

Commem. is come, and with Commem. come I.

[*He plunges into the Cherwell.*

OXFORD, June, 1907.

MY EIGHTS WEEK WINDOW-BOX

(A STUDY IN HYPOCRISY.)

AMANDA ! when my window-box,
With loving care and tea-leaves tended,
Smiles on the Alidensian frocks
That throng the Quad, a vision splendid,

You wonder at my mignonette,
My early efforts at Sweet Willum,
And ask me, where on earth I get
Such *beautiful himantiphyllum*.

Alas ! you should not seek to know ;
Truth must be told, though hearts be sorest :
They came on Wednesday, and they go
Next Friday, to the self-same florist !

You curl your lip, you give a stare
Productive of regretful twinges,
As one who in her rival's hair
Discovers epeisactic fringes :

“ Bought for the week ? ” You mark the flaw :
“ At least your *Honesty* has droopèd !
Must your Adonis-gardens draw
The long bow in the cause of Cupid ? ”

But stop—each window-dressing gay
Deserves alike your Jeremiad ;
The College hires them by the day
From Mr. Johnson's large supply—(*Ad.*)

For—isn't Eights Week mostly lies ?
Think you that Oxford's always stewing ?
That only hock-cup occupies,
And man can nothing, save canoeing ?

Come up again, Amanda, ere
The Summer Term be wholly over ;
Come up, and take us unaware,
When more of pigs, and less in clover ;

When, daily, students read for Groups
Under the dreaming garden trees, and
When, nightly, undeciphered whoops
Thrill from the undergraduate weasand !

OXFORD, *May, 1909.*

LINES TO A LADY
IN A PHOTOGRAPHIC STUDIO.

(After KEATS.)

RELUCTANT priestess, to whose mystic shrine
Thy suitors come in festal garments drest,
Yet not with festal mien, but cheeks that pine,
And shamefast eyes, and anxious hearts distrest ;
Look not so coldly on me, sacred girl,
While with the mirror's aid I overhaul
The truant neck-wear, hurriedly arranged,
The too exuberant curl :
Or while I scan the heads on yonder wall,
The trophies of thy victims, heavens, how
changed !

Where is thine acolyte—the presence, tall,
The smile that never leaves his lips for ours,
Though in a fervid longing to recall
Archdeacons' pleasantries, he tax our powers,
Or jokes in *Punch* that thralled us long ago ?
Why lingers he in yonder mossy cell
Amid those dishes that the lantern's screen
Bathes in a crimson glow ?
With what Circean drug, what potent spell,
What hyposulphate, or what hippocrene ?

Nay, but he tarries in thy temple fair,
Over the tripod shrouding his pale head ;

What careful victim kneels before him there
With folded hands, and gaze disquieted?
He speaks! I know not with what fears or hopes
He chides him, half in comfort, half in scorn;
Or with what suddenness, unknown to him
The magic casement opes
'Mid perilous seas that beat on canvas torn,
And Attic colonnades by forests dim.

He calls me. Let him take me while I speak!
For what my presence lacks thy hand can give;
Thy touch can bring the colour to these cheeks,
And smooth this forehead, in the negative.
Adieu, adieu! Immortal is thine art,
Thy maiden votaries need never dye,
Those images can never lose their prime!
And still, as I depart,
Thou bid'st me hope for proofs that cannot lie,
And prints that fade not with the prints of
time.

MANCHESTER, *October, 1908.*

ANNUS MIRABILIS :
THE "Isis" QUATERCENTENARY.

[A Study in final vowels.]

MILTON has had his day ;
Darwin has come to stay ;
Most people sing or say
 Johnson his praises :
Corunna's wild affray,
Beethoven's works in A,
Tennyson's views on May,
 Thunder like blazes.

Now Old-Age Pensions free
Dotards of eighty-three
To wander on the spree
 Each as he pleases :
Bishops still disagree ;
Asquith is up a tree ;
Every one seems, like me,
 Given to sneezes.

Wiseacres grimly sigh,
Saying : "We 'll have a high
Old time with that there Nigh
 Easterly crisis" :
They may be right, but I
Answer : "O socii,
Nil desperandum, si
 Dux erit 'Isis.'"

Earthquakes may overthrow ;
 Yes, it may even snow ;
 India don't seem to show
 Prospects of roses :
 Grayson declares it's no
 (To put it coarsely) go
 To stick to laws we owe
 . Mainly to Moses.

Aëronauts subdue
 The vast unfathomed blue,
 Which to submit, it's true,
 Sometimes refuses :
 Numbers have got the 'flu ;
 Suffragists stick like glue ;
 Oxo and Sunlight Sue
 Still court the Muses.

Journalists vainly try
 To follow one whose sly
 Moves by Great Western Ry.

Call for a *lysis* : *
 They may be right, but why
 Should we neglect to buy
 Quadrigentenary
 Issues of "*Isis*" ?

OXFORD, January, 1909.

* This poem was written when the "Charlesworth Mystery" was at its height.

MEGALOMANIA

By a FOURTH YEAR MAN.

(After MILTON.)

HENCE, vain Committee meetings,
Of politics and social fervour born,
Meals at the Grid, and grinds that break the morn:
Hence, peaceful punt and noisy Quad,
To some retreat by man untrod,
Some limbo yet impenetrable of Keating's.
But come, my goddess that shalt be,
Humaniores Literae;
Come, with lecture-haunting haste,
And note-books cunningly enlac'd,
Come with Hope and simple Faith
And philosophick Shibboleth,
And ancient History in thy train,
Pensive, sober, and humane.
When I rise, no punctual Dean
Shall summon me at 1.15,
No jealous pen the record keep
Betwixt my Matins and my sleep.
So to breakfast, and anon
I rise t' attend the drowsy don,
Telling his rosary evermore
Of Tacit, Grote, and Diodore:
Still will I walk, from dawn to dusk
In raiment sordid and subfusc,
Ever, in thought, the candid tie
Shall be my neck's phylactery.

And I will take, 'neath wintry skies,
My postmeridian exercise
To Ferry Hincksey, or the Parks,
Now in Oxon, now in Berks,
With an uncomplaining friend
Discoursing wisely of the End :
(Wherewith the nimble Stagirite
Commenc'd his work, and said, when night
O'ertook him prating of the *Méσον*,
"Let us begin"—the Second Lesson).
Then will I to my books again
Till the whisky'd hour of ten,
Or such time as the weary'd Progs
Call in their base-informing dogs.
Such life might well the Gods beseem.
Then to bed at night, to dream
Of Alphas struggling with a pair
Of Categories in the air,
Love-lorn Idealists, that seek
Presentations most unique,
And golfers playing, frantick souls,
Round Copulas of eighteen Wholes.
And ever, to delude my foes,
Wrap me in a cynick pose
Of intellectual despair,
Holier than hermit's shirt of hair.
These give me, and a score of dates,
And I will get a — in Greats.

THE OLD PARSONAGE, ST. GILES', *October, 1909.*

CUCULLUS FACIT MONACHUM

[Lines suggested by an ecclesiastical advertisement.]

QUICKLY the Church's seasons change,
“*Mutamur nos in illis*”;
Hasten, ye vicars, to arrange
With Messrs. J-n-s and W-ll-s.

See where he stands, that fervent soul,
The Reverend Michael Dolan,
Accoutred in a Lenten stole,
That is not lent nor stolen !

His visage lit with holy fire—
Of that we make no mention ;
It is, in fact, to his attire,
That we would call attention.

The band around his shoulders slim
Is of the very purplest,
For J-n-s and W-ll-s cassocked him,
And J-n-s and W-ll-s surpliced.

The sidesmen, and the wardens too,
Who manage the collection,
Have each an almsbag in their pew
Of just the same complexion.

And peeping out between their thumbs
Both Corydon and Phyllis
Whisper admiringly, "It comes
From Messrs. J-n-s and W-ll-s."

Then come, insure by telegram
An early executing;
Address it to "Eccl-sia, B'ham"
And choose your Lenten suiting.

Quinquagesima, 1908.

OXFORD CLERICAL TYPES

I

THERE once was a Cleric—oh my!
As broad as the ambient sky:
 From S. Martin's to Queen's
 He travelled by means
Of the Broad, as opposed to the High.

II

There once was a man who said: “I
Am a Moderate Churchman; for why?
 S. Philip, you know,
 Was inclined to be Low,
But S. James was excessively High.”

III

There once was a man who said: “Stoles
Pervert undergraduate souls.”
 So he took his abode
 In the Banbury Road,
And saved them as brands from the coles.

THE VISITORS' BOOK,
HARTLAND QUAY.

CORYDON. WHAT, Echo, shall I find at Hartland
Quay,
Save walls abandoned long ago, and sea?
ECHO. Go, and see.

COR. Nay, but describe it, Echo, for thy sighs
My roving accents quaintly parodize.
ECH. Paradise.

COR. How shall I reach (for wind and wave are
fickle)
Those fields untouched by harrow or by
sickle?
ECH. Bicycle.

COR. What of the beds? What portion waits the
roamer
Lulled by the murmur of the Atlantic
comber?
ECH. Coma.

COR. What of the food? What influence supreme,
If baby seems in pain, will hush a scream?
ECH. Luscious cream.

COR. And will this land, when nought that's tender
grows,

Yield beans and blackberries *ἄντροπάτως*?

ECH. Or tomatoes.

COR. What exploits, then, shall occupy my time,
Wearied with wandering in many a clime?

ECH. Many a climb.

COR. Were it not best to lie on couch of clover?
Great is the peril, lest I should fall over.

ECH. Faugh! loafer.

COR. If, yet untired, I'd cool the heated limb,
Can any panacea heal this whim?

ECH. A healthy swim.

COR. What then my week's expenditure, and how
Reckoned the cost? my mind enlighten now.

ECH. Light enow.

COR. What of mine host? for, if the host be rude,
The fare, whate'er it be, is none so good.

ECH. None's so good.

COR. Come, Echo, thou hast visited this spot?
I have conjectured shrewdly, have I not?

ECH. Have I not!

COR. Who dwelt with thee, where Hartland lies
concealed;
Where winds, that rule in sea, spare stone
and field?

ECH. Rieu, Lindsay, Speyer, Stone, and Field.

COR. What is thy name? For Atho mountains
make a
Clear *"Ηχω*, but thou art in Pindar *"Αχα*.

ECH. R. A. K.

September, 1907.

THE VISITORS' BOOK,

BOURTON-ON-THE-WATER.

(After lunch.)

“THE placid Windrush running by
Attracts the weary traveller’s eye”;
So far I may with safety quote—
But not the weary traveller’s throat.
Bourton on Water? Rather here
We’ll drink all Burton out of Beer.

April, 1910.

ON CAMPS

EVER since Clough and his friends settled into their unpronounceable but conveniently hephthemimeral quarters at the Bothie of Tober-na-vuolich, the reading-party has held a recognized position in the orthodox conception of a Long Vac. Nor would we attempt to assail that position, with all the associations that cluster round it. No doubt four months at a stretch is more than long enough opportunity to exchange fond greetings with our over-joyed relatives and deeply-affected retainers ; we pine once more for the society of a kindred age, for choice spirits who, like ourselves, do not view life with the obscurantist orthodoxy of Uncle Richard, or the oppressive heartiness of the youthful Freddy.

The pseudo-Bohemian atmosphere born of irregular hours, much smoking, and absence of evening dress combines with the natural attractions of the lonely spot to heal the sores of our so-called civilization. But it is one thing to escape from the Family for a week or two, as a tonic ; it is another to make congenial gatherings the staple occupation if not the *raison d'être* of the Long.

It is significant that the decay of home life should go side by side with that of another great national institution, — the silly season. Belfast riots and Limerick massacres are not the only things res-

ponsible for this innovation. From Cambridge, from Stuttgart, from Yarmouth, from the Hague, we hear of conferences and rumours of conferences—ominous signs of the times. The Church has long led the way in organizing discussions of more or less academic questions in solemn state. And the Peace delegates, if equally academic, are equally harmless. But of recent years these high midsummer pomps have been coming on with a vengeance. There will soon be no sort of Union, Federation, Association, Society, Guild, League, Church, Sect, Fad, Movement, Party, Heresy, Schism, Philosophy, or Conspiracy in the world which does not meet, with sandwiches and a whole crowd of reporters, and discuss the "New Movement," or the "Cause," in its political, religious, philosophical, ethical, teleological, eschatological, scientific, psychological, historical, practical, theoretical, and heaven knows what other aspects, for the edification of its own number, who are all reading papers, and the impassive custodians of the public Halls in which they disport themselves.

This craze has bitten Oxford to an alarming degree. Religious, political, and social organizations are claiming all the spare time of our wisest and best. The old idea of a monastic retreat as a means of recouping from the scars of the world, is replaced by that of an immense gathering where egg-and-spoon races and addresses follow one another in dithyrambic confusion. Heartiness and holiness walk side by side. And in such camps and campaigns, missions

and commissions, concerts and congresses, the time passes away, pleasantly enough, no doubt, but rather inadequately so far as the humarer letters are concerned. After all, the Vac. is meant for work. If dissipations in the form of clubs and festivities, societies and recreations, Mods lectures and Greats lectures, keep us too busy at Oxford to prepare ourselves in any way for Schools, at least let us have our holiday time free to repair the deficiencies.

Nor is it only the favoured few who are threatened. In the world at large there is no cause so insignificant as to be without its conference, except perhaps that of burglary and that of certified insanity. In a short time the diary of an average Long will run thus:—

June 20—30. Congress of the Classical Association on the Yorkshire Moors. Professor Talkard read a paper on the elision of diphthongs in Greek. Dr. Dryasdust won the obstacle race. Further discussion on the elision of diphthongs. A well-spent time.

July 1—8. Attended Re-union of the Ethical Churches in North Wales. Rev. James Wassher on "The Spirituality of Swinburne" and "Pantheism in Christina Rossetti." Ethical expedition to Conway. Rev. James Wassher on "Why I ceased to be a Baptist." Record attendance of 16. Pietistic picnic on Snowdon.

July 9—23. World Congress of anti-bimetallists at Weston-super-Mare. Count Sauwosch on "The slavery of Bimetallism."

July 23—28. Went home to get some clothes washed.

July 29—August 18. Health Society's camp on Salisbury Plain. Dr. John P. Harker on "Hygiene: the new religion." Constitutional walks on the plain. Mrs. McFadden on "The Dignity of Diet." Hygienic hymns sung at night. Returned with a bad cold.

August 18—September 3. Anti-Socialist Gathering in the Dukeries. Mr. Potter (late M.P.) on "The Constitution and the Colonies." Champagne dinner at the Duke of —'s. Mr. Hawkins (ex-Mayor of Poddlebury) on "Our dear old Church."

Sept. 3—25. Diabolists' World Congress on Isle of Skye. Champion feather-weight (aged 3) on "Is Diabolo intellectual?" During discussion that followed, brained the infant champion with a spool.

Sept. 25 onwards. National gathering of stone-breakers on Dartmoor.

OXFORD, *October, 1907.*

THE CELEBRATIONS ON THE FIFTH OF NOVEMBER

(From the *Journal of Britannic Studies*, A.D. 2907.)

By DR. J. PARAFRAZER.

IN several curious fragments of the so-called Victorian civilization we meet allusions to the festival observed on "Guy Fawkes" day, the fifth of the month November. Apparently the Guy, or Gai, as he should probably be called, was carried round the streets on a rude chariot, while the followers uttered incantations, and caused some annoyance by repeated requests for money. At the conclusion of the procession the Gai was burned on a large pyre, beside which some primitive form of pyrotechnic display was organized. Some of the chants have been preserved to us; one of them running thus:

Remember, remember, the Fifth of November,
Gunpowder treason and plot;
I see no reason why gunpowder treason
Should ever be forgot.

And again—

Gai, Gai,
It im* in the eye;
Stick im on a lamp-post
And there let im lie.

* There is little doubt that the aspirate did not exist in British at the period referred to.

The purpose of this paper will be to throw some light on the origin of this interesting cult, hidden as it is under a mass of ignorant legend and foolhardy conjecture.

From the first, we must set aside as palpably aetiological the stratum of pretended history, which we may term the priestly myth. The well-known story of the man who attempted to destroy the whole of the Executive, is condemned at once by its inherent improbability and by the multitude of parallel examples of fabrication in the history of comparative religion. Even as late as the time of the seventh Edward it is doubtful whether the annihilation of the "Parliament" would have been looked upon as a national disaster. Nor is evidence lacking to show that the historicity of this incident was called in question by the early critics. In any case we cannot too clearly emphasize the fact that the mind of primitive peoples does not work in this way, prior to the dawn of the historic consciousness. But the legend is interesting as illustrating the rule that the new religion, as it supersedes the old, saddles it with the less amiable characters of its own mythology, so that the simple earth-hero becomes an exponent of the old creed, obstinately setting his face against the newer rival, and appropriately punished.

We must now turn to the name of the title-rôle. That the first part is connected by root with the Greek *Gaia*, or earth, there seems no reason to doubt. Can we assign any similar meaning to the second?

The great majority of critics have agreed in referring it the Indo-European root of *fax* and *focus*. But all attempts to establish such connections between languages radically different are little better than special pleading. It is impossible to resist the belief that we have here a trace of a very early totemism. We know that the Fox, or *vulpes communis*, as we should call it nowadays, was regarded with superstition by the Britons; so much so that in spite of frequent degradations on farmers, it was held criminal to kill or even maim the animal. If, as seems probable, he was worshipped under the cultus-title of Rainard, it is well-nigh impossible to resist the suggestion that it was applied to him in his capacity as controlling the powers of nature, and consequently responsible for the fertility or otherwise of the crops. Now if we combine these sources of evidence we arrive at the conclusion that "Gai Fox" is an earth-god of considerable antiquity, with the double-name arising probably from a confusion of cults.

What then is the meaning of the elaborate ritual above described? The explanation is not far to seek. We are close to the root of all the sun-myths, including the legend of Pentheus. The old year, represented by the stubble-image, is carried out amid execrations and assaults of apotropaic significance, and finally burnt in order to secure the safety of the next year's harvest. The bonfire represents the sun. Returning then to the second dithyrambic fragment above quoted, we may fairly assume that the lamp-

post alluded to has something of the same significance. Finally, the fireworks would appear to be an appeal by means of sympathetic magic to the stars as nature-forces, or as controlling the destinies of men.

One more question will naturally present itself to us. Was it only a senseless image of the receding year that was first pelted in mockery and then burnt at the stake? Or may we trace a more sinister meaning in the silence of most ancient authors on this subject? Is it possible that here we meet an actual survival of human sacrifice in historic and nominally civilized times? Most critics have been content to scout the notion; Mr. Bilgeway, in a really eloquent defence of the period, has argued at great length against such a possibility. But we must not be too mealy-mouthed. We must not be prepared to read into the history of a thousand years ago those considerations of humanity and gentleness which are characteristic of our own. On the whole, if we are to face the probabilities squarely, we must admit that the presumption is in favour of the sterner view, and that in all likelihood the Fifth of November was stained annually with one of those orgies of superstitious carnage to which primitive religion is too sadly liable.

OXFORD, *November, 1907.*

ON RAGS

“NE quis confoederationes sive conspirationes ineat, unde Cancellarius, Procuratores, seu alii ministri Universitatis, in executione officiorum suorum, secundum Statuta et Ordinationes ejusdem, impediri vel perturbari possint, sub poena bannitionis ab Universitate vel in tempus aliquod vel in perpetuum.”

Queste parole di colore oscuro vid' io scritte in the widely circulated but little read pages of the *Statuta et Decreta Universitatis Oxoniensis*. So much the reader will have guessed from the simple if unconventional Latinity for which that work is so justly famous. Deferring for the moment our perusal of its telling phrases, we ask ourselves: “Why do rags happen? Are they all organized of malice prepense? And if so, what is this diabolical secret society, which can turn the High into a seething mass of antinomian undergraduates and inexorable police?”

Now one thing is quite clear about rags and riots and mobs in general, that they arise without any definite notion of what they are about. It is idle to suppose that Demetrius and his Union wielded any real political power in Ephesus. It is idle to suppose that the Warden of Outland called out any real hostility from the excitable populace who surrounded his palace. Nor have we any ground for supposing that the Roman people was seriously annoyed at the

death of Julius Caesar. There is but one explanation of the riot, whether people are crying "Great is Diana of the Ephesians" or "Less Bread, more Taxes," or whether they are honest enough to content themselves with the phrase "We will be satisfied: let us be satisfied." In every case, the rank and file of illicit assemblies consists of unattached persons who hear vaguely that something is afoot, and leave the comfort and safety of their homes to see what it is.

The phenomenon is of course recognized, nay, commonplace. If you have the courage to go out into the street and stare at the top of a house, or go down on your knees and peer into one of those romantic orifices with which a hygienic civilization has so plentifully honeycombed our thoroughfares, in a quarter of an hour the street will be lined, and there will be one or two horse-policemen, and with any luck somebody reading the Riot Act. If you are the King of Spain you can compass a similar result by merely taking a walk in Kensington Gardens. It simply comes of the unpardonable curiosity of our unregenerate nature. It is just the same in Belfast. You have at first a fairly ordinary strike, and a few words going. Instantly a crowd of people comes to see the fun; somebody shoves some one, and his neighbour in making way for him falls into a policeman; the policeman draws a truncheon, and there is a riot in a moment. All because of people who will not mind their own business.

At Oxford the thing happens more easily than

anywhere else, because Rumour painted full of tongues scours her day and night, and sets up her notices in every College porch. Word gets round—a significant phrase ; *pernotescit, θροεῖται, on dit*, in every language we have this same feeling of an impersonal agency that gives our secrets to the world—word gets round that there is a twenty-firster at Univ, and they are going to barricade the High ; or a man has been sent down from Worcester, and his friends are going to let off fireworks at the Martyrs' Memorial ; instantly the clubs are depopulated, the Theatre languishes, books and cards are thrown to the winds, and an anxious crowd gathers at the appointed spot. If anything happens, most of them will join in ; if nothing happens, they will melt reluctantly and go home. But if they had not left their colleges, the organizers of the mischief, some twenty in number, could have been gagged and bound by a single bull-dog. About a week later the authorities get official wind of it, and a posse of special constables parades the desolate streets like victors in a sacked and conquered city.

Let it be understood at once that we have not a word to say in favour or even in extenuation of “rags.” But we do say that the real offender in the case of a large row is not the man who is healthily if unpleasantly intoxicated, but the man who goes out in cold blood out of sheer curiosity, that most repulsive of vices, to help from a distance in a riot which he has neither the courage to start nor the

wit to organize. When people complain that they were fined for just looking on at Tuesday night's proceedings, we feel tempted to say, "And serve you right."

True, owing to an insufficiency of attendances at the ferial offices in Chapel, we were ourselves gated on Tuesday and Wednesday nights.

OXFORD, *November, 1907.*

ON POLITICS

A YEAR ago our friend Blennerhasset, of Wadford College, joined the Tariff Reform League. He did this to escape from the pesterings of the Free Food League ; he did not know till later that the subscription was double. This was all right so far as it went, because he never went to a meeting, and never received any literature, except a list of members, which he put up on his mantelpiece opposite the C. S. U. He did not find that it brought him in touch with the political life of the nation, and was secretly relieved that it did not. Unfortunately a political friend observed it, and offered to take him to a certain Conservative Club of the duller type, and he accepted the invitation with alacrity. He was so carried away by the debate (which was on the Labour Party) that he delivered a very incoherent speech on antediluvian lines which captivated the hearts of his audience, and the next week he was duly elected a member.

From that moment he has been a changed man. Politics were before to him a subject strictly reserved for post-prandial self-expansion. He never read the papers, except the extracts from the *Times* of 1807, and, while it lasted, Mr. Le Queux's excellent little handbook on the Invasion of 1910. He knew few of

our eminent politicians by portrait, and indeed there was little reason why he should; for whatever the mandate of the present Government is, it was not elected on account of personal attractiveness. He was not aware that the white man had a burden, nor what good capital could be made out of it. He had no idea that Cobden was a schemer, or Gladstone a wind-bag. In fact, the calibre of his political knowledge was typical of the classes which are quite content to leave their affairs in other people's hands, so long as those people are gentlemen.

He has had a revulsion. No conversion was ever so complete as that which followed the evening when he stood up and testified about the Labour Party. He took in the *Daily Mail* again, and the *National Review*, and listened to several long speeches on Imperial defence. He attended all the meetings of his club, and a good many of other clubs, and some of the others were so insignificant that they also adopted him. He went regularly to the Union, and although he never spoke, stayed so long that everybody thought he would have spoken if he had got the chance. In time he acquired a sort of second-hand notoriety which made obscure colleges ask him to their open debates, mainly on Female Suffrage. And now we may take him as a very fair representative of the Beta Plus Oxford politician, with a blunt humour, and a fund of useless information about Deep-Sea Fisheries and the like.

A year has rolled over his primrose-wreathed head,

and we find him still spending his evenings at the clubs and at the Union. He is various minor officials, which make it necessary for him to send off a little sheaf of notes every week to a largely absentee population. From time to time he frequents a political dinner, and hears a gentleman or two who all but got in at the Election discoursing on the iniquities of the Government. Even in the Vacs, if he has nothing better to do, he goes and canvasses at by-elections. Let it not be supposed for a moment that all this is due to his being a Conservative ; as we said, if he had known the fact about the subscriptions, he would probably have become a Liberal or a Socialist, and there is no reason to suppose that his career would have been materially different.

Meanwhile, we will not say that his work has suffered. He passed Moderations with credit, and even his tutors do not expect him to do well in History. But the result is that he never reads. He is hardly ever in his rooms, unless he is being the Hierophant of some Constitutional orgies ; and many of his friends have dropped him in consequence. He battens on the literature he read at his excellent public school, which he never uses except to draw incomplete analogies with the political situation. He does not broaden his mind by conversation, because he spends most of his time talking to people who agree with him, or who disagree with him so violently that he has made up his mind not to be convinced. It is not in the least true to say that he learns how to

argue ; he would learn it six times better by going and listening to a Humanitarian Deist in Hyde Park. He lives, in short, a life of perpetual routine, which would be conventional if he ever enjoyed the monastic privilege of silence. Instead, he has got into the disagreeable habit of listening to other people to see where he can pick them up ; and at the same time deluding himself into the idea that it is their voices, and not his own, that he comes to hear every week.

None of his relatives can understand this tendency on his part, but they have a vague notion that a young man begins to think for himself when he goes up to Oxford. Exactly the reverse is true : he begins to take other people's word for things, and reproduce it as his own.

There is not much more to be said. As he himself said only last Friday, in addressing the Stratford Club on Social Reform : "There is little or no doubt that the people of this country take an intelligent interest in politics."

Blennerhasset is going to be a stockbroker. We have no doubt that he will broke stocks very adequately. But it seems rather a pity.

OXFORD, *October, 1907.*

A
DECALOGUE
SYMPOSIUM

ANOTHER PREFACE

I 'M sorry, but I 'm afraid the Decalogue Symposium must have a preface all to itself. The Decalogue was a literary Society in Balliol, so called because it consisted of nineteen members. The author conceived the idea of writing a dialogue which would provide one part for each member, and no more, and it was actually read, one summer evening, by a quorum of the whole Society. Unfortunately, true to the spirit of modern Drama, the parts were all "written round" the several actors, and many purely personal allusions will be lost on a larger audience : it can only be said, in the words of Hippocrides, that "it was screamingly funny when you saw it done." One result of this is, that the characters are not always quite true to themselves : and the only living author introduced was brought in not to expound his own views (whatever those may be), but to provide a cloak for the personality of the present writer, who sustained the part himself.

A DECALEGUE SYMPOSIUM

Dramatis Personae:

THE CHAIRMAN (almost any XIXth Century Liberal).

HIPPOCLIDES. ADIMANTUS BOSWELL WATSON.

SOCRATES. MR. B-RN-RD SH-W.

ARISTOTLE. THE MARCH HARE.

CICERO. SIR ROGER DE COVERLEY.

S. FRANCIS. PETER PAN.

CHARLES II. SIR JOHN FALSTAFF.

DR. JOHNSON. SAM WELLER.

MRS. MALAPROP. CHORUS OF VIRTUES.

SHERLOCK HOLMES. CHORUS OF VICES.

(Also New Women, Telephone Messengers, Bimetallists, Flagellants, Licensed Victuallers, Hyperboreans, Seventh Day Baptists, Condottieri, Little Oil-Baths, etc.).

SCENE I.

THE CHAIRMAN.—Gentlemen, the time is ripe. At this moment the don, distended with an enlarged edition of undergraduate fare, is reclining in his Senior Common-room. The pale student replaces the standard dietary with the less peptic alternative of chocolate biscuits. The Proctor—

[SHERLOCK HOLMES (*contemptuously*).—Bunglers!]
—nerves himself for his Midianitish prowlings with a glass of the familiar and blushing Hippocrene. The rowing man carries his newly-assimilated repast to the hallowed silence of his dormitory. It is a time to

speak, and not a time to refrain from speaking. I call on Mr. Socrates to open the discussion.

(*Applause.*)

SOCRATES.—I went down lately to the Barneion, both to see the Procession, how they would organize it, and also because I thought it would be nice to get a walk for once in a way. And here I met Sherlock Holmes, disguised as a history Don, having been engaged for the occasion by Lady —, and also his friend Watson, who was writing very busily in a note-book under some such title as “The Strange Case of the Burgled Biretta.” As I was turning to go away, a plain-clothes man stepped up to me, and said: “Sherlock Holmes wishes to see you, Sir.” “Very well, then,” said I, “we will wait.” So we waited to see what this would come to.

DR. JOHNSON.—Sir, if this ungrammatical babbler is allowed to prosecute his damnable anecdotes, I shall have no say in the controversy at all.

MRS. MALAPROP.—In truth, Master Chairman, you might ask the gentleman to be a little more Glyconick.

THE CHAIRMAN.—Gentlemen, I bow to the voice of the majority; and call on Mr. Aristotle to commence a discussion, of which Mr. Socrates is like to debar us from the conclusion.

ARISTOTLE (*in a great hurry*).—As to the nature of Love and the parts of it, and as to the methods and media of it, and again as to how it originated and to what completion it has developed or is developing, let the following words be spoken.

THE MARCH HARE.—They could n't follow, you know, unless they were spoken.

ARIST.—There might be a mistake in the Arabic.

THE M. H.—They do follow you, though ; for miles together sometimes. Especially the Gerunds. May be you 've never met a Gerund ?

ARIST.—Humour is a certain division of the base. Whether then Love can be other than physical, let it now be defined.

HIPPOCLIDES.—I am always physical. I made an awfully good joke once—did I ever tell you this ? You see, some other fellows and I were courting a young lady, and they had just brought in the tea-table. So, before the servant had time to lay the things, I did a short-arm balance on the table, and (*graphically*) waved my legs in the air. It was screamingly funny when you saw it done.

CHORUS OF VICES.—

Hippocrides ! with dignified ease
Balancing upon a chair ;
Little wist he Agariste
Saw him waving in the air.

CHORUS OF VIRTUES.—Hush ! Hush !

MR. SH-W.—English people always think they are being funny when they talk about Legs. May I protest against the intrusion of any form of sentiment in this discussion ? Let 's admit at once that Man is still a beast ; that morality, when it is n't superstitious, is conventional.

DR. J.—What is that over there ?

THE M. H.—A heavy man trying to be funny.

S. H.—A Socialist, evidently.

A. B. WATSON.—My dear Holmes !

S. H.—There is no mistaking the peculiar paper of the Fabian basis which protrudes from his left-hand coat pocket. A vegetarian, clearly, by his teeth, and a journalist by the conformation of his right thumb. He leads a sedentary life, and is an Irishman.

MRS. M.—It is a nasty fellow, Doctor, that must needs come in with his diaphragms, and tell us that all morality, which is not supposititious, is conventional.

MR. S.—I say, Sir, that you're no better than a beast when you're in love. You think you are, but you are n't.

DR. J.—Sir, you throw the aegis of a philosophy which no one but you could adopt, over a pornography which no one but you could appreciate.

HIPPOC.—Half-time. There will be no collection. Might I ask the honourable gentleman to repeat his statement ?

MRS. M.—He says, Mr. Sh-w is throwing the haggis of a philosophy which no one but he could adopt, over a photography which no one but he could depreciate.

S. FRANCIS.—Surely, Master Sh-w, may it not be that Love, which exists in us poor mortals in so imperfect a form, is granted yet more imperfectly to Brother Ape and Brother Dog ?

MR. S.—I don't know anything about your brothers, Sir, but you're not qualified to speak on the subject.

In spite of being a monk, you know nothing of Love. You haven't the feelings of a man.

THE M. H.—No more have you. You think you have, but you haven't.

S. FRAN.—You say truly, brother. I am only a poor friar.

MR. S.—I detest humility. It is always either unnecessary or insincere.

S. FRAN.—In truth, I had suspected that you and she were something strangers.

ARIST.—How good S. Francis is! For we call good that to which we despair of attaining.

PETER PAN (*yawning*).—I am getting tired of this. I do want to find out what Love really is.

S. H.—Who is that? You see it, Watson, you see it?

A. B. W.—That's Peter Pan, the boy who lost his shadow.

S. H.—It must have been that incompetent fellow Lestrade. He never can keep anybody in sight for three minutes together.

SOCRATES.—Here, Adimantus, have you finished? It appears, then, that Love is not entirely physical?

A. B. W.—My dear Socrates!—I mean, it appears so.

SOCRATES.—And indeed, has this escaped you, that the further off the object of our affection is, the stronger does the affection happen to be?

A. B. W.—How do you say?

SOCRATES.—As, for instance, that a man falls in

love with his mother-in-law rarely if at all? And similarly with the rest of the family?

A. B. W.—True.

SOCRATES.—And again, after long absence, we find that we are more deeply enamoured, as the poet says :

“Absence makes the heart grow fonder.”

A. B. W.—It runs the risk of doing so.

CICERO.—It often seems to me, when I reflect upon the nature of Love, that there is something which produces the effect, that so far from being weakened in our affection by distance, we should appear to be more closely conjoined. And I remember that I spoke very often on this subject with a most heavy and ornate man, Caius Brunius Jutus, and that he was wont to assure me that those friendships which he found most durable were those formed with friends he saw the least often.

ARIST.—What a perfect autobiographical style Cicero has! It reminds me of A. C. ——.

DR. J.—Sir, the man who would write his own life is either afraid of the judgment of posterity, or too poor a creature to find a biographer.

ARIST.—Nevertheless, autobiography seems to have a function. For the best Art makes men appear better than they are; and the writings of Mr. —— make him—

A. B. W.—But surely now, Doctor, you yourself said—

SOCRATES (*severely*).—Adimantus!! It would seem,

then, that we are able to love those who are in the most distant countries?

A. B. W.—Yes, Doctor,—I mean, it appears so.

CHORUS OF VICES.—

I love a girl in Damietta!
I can't forget her! I can't forget her!
I love a girl in Damietta
Beneath a mango tree.

CHORUS OF VIRTUES.—Hush! Hush!

There's a little sailor sitting
In a cabin dark and bare;
There's a widowed mother knitting,
On a lonely London stair:
She thinks of her boy in the offing
So happy and so pure,
And she knows he's safe from coughing
With —'s great Peppermint Cure!

SOCRATES.—May we not, then, lay it down that Love, in so far as it is the love of some one, and not the love of a certain person of certain features, such as yellow hair or a bottle nose, but itself by itself, is entirely spiritual? Or did we not admit that there was a certain kind of love for those who are long absent?

CHARLES II.—Sir, I protest that this is a most ungallant speech in the presence of the charms of Mrs. Malaprop. I'faith, she is like a Grace among Satyrs.

MRS. M.—La ! your Majesty, I am afraid 'tis not to myself you refer, but to my attire. You are as courteous as Sir Caliban.

SIR JOHN FALSTAFF.—By the Rood, now, it may be that I am something different made to other men ; but whensoever my manhood gets the better of me, methinks I am not entirely spiritual.

S. H.—I see, Sir John, that your mode of life is not ascetic.

A. B. W.—My dear Holmes ! How on earth—

SIR J. F.—Indeed, it may be that I am somewhat given to ventriculation. But a woman is to me as a good pint of sack ; a shred of comfort in a vale of misery.

S. FRAN.—And would it be a vale of misery, Sir, without the women ?

SIR J. F.—Yes, thou vile cloister-bird ! Thou hateful anatomy, thou abominable bag of bones ! What ? Shall I be flouted in mine old age by a hedge-priest, a bodkin's point, a withered stock-fish, that eats nothing o' Fridays ? On my conscience, now, if I were minded to leave this chair, I would pin thee to yonder wall like a moth, and pepper thee a little to save thee from corruption !

THE CHAIRMAN.—Order ! Order ! This is not the time, and this is not the place, for the objurgations of Whitechapel, and the recriminations of Billingsgate. If you have any respect for Law and Order, if you wish to prosecute this discussion in the interests of Truth and to the furtherance of Education, I call

upon you, gentlemen, to resist all attempts at violation of the laws of Assault and Battery.

CICERO.—I was just about to remark that the action contemplated would be in direct contravention of the Lex Sliggeriana—“Ne quis cui endo manum jicito, neve intra muros conlegii, nisi ob spiritus animales, strepitus noctu faciatur.” I think you have it in your Festus, gentlemen.

ARIST.—It is obvious, then, that Love can neither be wholly physical nor wholly spiritual. For the one is the love of beasts, which is revolting. But the second is the love of angels, which is absurd. Let us now decide whether it is better to love one person, or several.

CHARLES II.—Gentlemen, I vow it is the greatest honour I have ever received, to listen to such a galaxy of talent. But we are here to discuss Love, and if we are to speak of constancy to a single flame, we shall but be discussing marriage. For my part, I hold your Cupido, or god of Love, to be a more roystering fellow than this, wherefore he is painted with wings, to show that he flits from one to another; and blind, which is as much as to say, that he never knows to whom he is dispensing his favours. Under such colours I enrol myself, constant to nothing, save inconstancy.

CHORUS OF VICES (*with apologies*).—

Hullo ! Hullo ! Hullo !

It's a different girl again,
Different eyes, different nose,
Different hair, different clothes—

Hullo ! Hullo ! Hullo !
 To me it's very plain,
 You've tickled the lady's fancy ; it's
 A different girl again.

CHORUS OF VIRTUES.—Hush ! Hush !

The tide, whose motions own the sway
 Of yonder silvery moon,
 Returneth constant day by day
 To flood the same lagoon.

The Sun, above the earth uplift,
 Doth swiftly ride and sure,
 But still more certain, still more swift
 Is ——'s great Peppermint Cure.

CH. II.—Is there any here that will deny me the right to a wandering love ? Truly, the very spice of it is, that we cannot move at night-time without the most dismal secrecy.

S. H.—If you take my advice, Charles Stuart, you will be more careful over your little games in future. Or must I remind you how I nabbed your pal Kit Wren on a similar occasion ? I think you have the case, Watson, under the title : "The Strange Affair of the Ecclesiastical Architect."

CH. II.—Gadzooks, Sir, what is Love, if it be not Sin ? Or who can call himself lover, that hath ever kept on the hither side of the Ten Commandments ?

A. B. W.—Do you think, Sir, that a man can fall in love without losing his virtue ?

DR. J.—Sir, he must keep his virtue, if he will fall in love. He cannot have the two pleasures at once.

A. B. W.—But may they not be the same thing?

DR. J.—Why no, Sir. A man cannot get drunk but he loses the pleasure of drinking, nor fall asleep but he loses the pleasure of lying in bed.

A. B. W.—What, then, do you think of Love?

DR. J.—Enough, Sir; your conversation is singularly tedious.

SAM WELLER.—Quite enough for vun evening, as the old genelman said ven 'e gave it up, and slept on the landing.

PETER PAN.—I can't understand all this. Wendy says I am in love with her, and there can't be two people like Wendy.

SOCRATES.—Shall we not then say that the man who has spent his time in dissipations, being always led on from one to another, finally arrives at such a pitch of dissoluteness, that his own pleasures induce satiety; and that thus, being as it were automatically gated by the Junior Dean of his own insensate passions, he continues to indulge himself not for his own enjoyment, but because he has lost the power of relinquishing his habits; till finally he reaches his end in the midst of the agathon alone knows how many miseries and misfortunes?

A. B. W.—True.

SOCRATES.—It will therefore be better to retain a single love, and that not, as the humorists say,

marred by marriage? For he who marries is doubly enslaved.

S. H.—Excuse me, Sir, but your remarks on this point seem tinged with personal feeling.

A. B. W.—Holmes, you astound me!

S. H.—Child's play, my dear Watson. When a man appears in public with a large stain of pitch on his left temple, and in a chiton that has not been brushed for a fortnight, you may be quite sure that he has fallen out with his wife.

DR. J. (*to SOCRATES*).—Sir, your last remark proves that you are either a libertine or a liar. Had you been fortunate enough to arouse my interest, I should be curious to know to which category you belong.

SOCRATES.—I hope that it may not appear, my friend, that I am both; for some hold ignorance to be vice. Nevertheless, we must persevere. Come, now, would not you yourself say that the married man has neither the liberty to leave his own wife, nor the chance of choosing another?

DR. J.—Sir, you shall not turn me into an Echo for your abominable sophistries. I have a stick here in my hand, with which I propose to beat you.

(*Pursues SOCRATES round the table.*)

THE CHAIRMAN.—Order! Order! I must entreat you, Sir, to postpone the argumentum ad baculum to a later occasion.

CICERO.—I think, Mr.—er—Clodius, that you are exceeding the—er—limit.

S. H.—Perhaps you are unaware, Samuel Johnson,

alias Probus Britannicus, that in a quarter of an hour I can put Scotland Yard in possession of the facts relating to the authorship of the "Norfolk Prophecy."

(SAMUEL JOHNSON *sinks into a chair.*)

Our friend there, Watson, is a bully, and like all bullies, a coward.

SOCRATES (*faint, yet pursuing*).—Let this be laid down as a kind of frontispiece to our work.

HIPPOC.—Οὐ Φροντίς Ἰπποκλίδη.

ALL (*shouting loudly*).—Oh ! Oh ! Hippoclides ! Stop him ! Stop him ! . . .

THE CHAIRMAN.—Gentlemen, things have gone so far, that we must mark a period in our deliberations. We will adjourn, therefore, to enjoy the refreshments of which the constitution of this Society and the fore-thought of the Vice-President invite us to partake.

End of Scene I.

SCENE II.

PETER PAN (*yawning*).—We seem to have been going on some time considering we have heard nothing new yet.

ARIST.—Yes, it would be very clever if the author had thought out his position at all.

HIPPOC.—I don't know ; do you think it very funny ? One has to laugh, but I don't feel very much amused by it.

SOCRATES.—Well, I don't know, you know ; of course it's awfully difficult to do that kind of thing. I think we shall get on all right.

THE M. H.—Could n't we put it to the vote?

THE CHAIRMAN.—Gentlemen, will those in favour of stopping say “Aye”?

ALL.—Aye!

THE CHAIRMAN.—Will those against say “No”?

MR. S.—No!

THE CHAIRMAN.—I think the Noes have it. I call upon Mr. Aristotle to continue the discussion of the question.

ARIST.—It will now be our duty to determine whether Love is the outcome of a similarity of tastes, or again the result of mere familiarity, or whether it implies a certain oneness of two souls. For one thing may be ascribed to several causes, as happened in the case of the man who lost his trousers at Carfax.

CICERO.—I have often wondered how it is that community of interests has so little effect in producing mutual affection. For I suppose there is no man more closely conjoined to me than that ingenious man Atticus, although we are immersed in these so great waves of the Republic, and he prefers to cultivate leisure. And here I find myself in disagreement with the illustrious Crassus, who was wont to say that he found those friendships the most delightful which were founded on community of interests.

CHORUS OF VICES.—

She's only a corps de ballet,

Only a dancing girl,

’Er name is only Sally,

And I am a belted Earl;

But I love 'er, I love 'er,
And you can't get over that;
And she's coming to stay for life, they say,
In my beautiful Bloomsbury flat.

CHORUS OF VIRTUES.—Hush! Hush!

The girl whose cheeks are ripest,
The man whose arms are steel,
The pallid London typist,
The clerk who's done a deal,

All those who say they simply
Life's worries can't endure,
Will find a cleanser from influenza
In ——'s great Peppermint Cure.

SIR ROGER DE COVERLEY.—Familiarity, too, is undoubtedly a great incentive to Love, as is proved by the story of a certain neighbour of mine, that married one who had been his foster-sister from Infancy. Upon which I took occasion to ask him, Whether his passion for her had sprung from this Connexion? Whereat he reply'd, That if he had come to know her at twenty, he would never have recogniz'd her Virtues till he had been too old to marry.

MRS. M.—Nevertheless, Sir Roger, I hold that such intricacy does not become a young woman. I would not have her acquainted with any male society, till she should have reached years of depression.

SIR R.—But surely, my dear Mrs. Malaprop, such a course would leave her no power of choosing, so that she would either remain a spinster till her dying day, or else be snapped up by the first saucy intriguer that sought her hand?

MRS. M.—Nay, but she should have nothing to do with the choosing. These violent predilections don't become a young woman. I would have her kept by her parents as straitly as Daniel in the Brazen Tower; and when the time came, they should find her an illegible husband to lead her to the halter.

SIR R.—It was a custom among the antient Romans, that the father should have the controul of his son's choice even in the election of a wife; in consequence of which, we hear very frequently of divorce and separations among them. And indeed all such restrictions seem to be contrary to Nature, who has order'd that the young of a beast or bird, when they become able to shift for themselves, no longer own their parents' Authority.

MRS. M.—I would have a maid at all events espue the company of such as were not her relatives, if it be only in the way of Modesty; lest by habilitating herself to their Society she come to believe that she has a regard for them. There is nothing like a good long absence to test the reality of a girl's ablutions.

SIR R.—I believe there is one great difficulty that we all encounter in discussing this matter of *Love*, that so long as a man has no knowledge of it he

cannot be required to give a decision ; yet no sooner does he become caught in the Toils, than he loses all his Philosophy, and vows, That no other man in the world ever loved as he does.

MR. S. (*to HIPPOC.*).—Rather boring, all this, is n't it ?

HIPPOC.—I must say I think it 's rather rot.

MR. S.—Well, you see, they are characters, so they have to be introduced somehow. It does n't make the slightest difference to the plot.

THE M. H.—There is n't any, you know, so it could n't.

MR. S.—What I mean is, it makes no difference to the plot, in so far as there is one.

THE M. H.—You might as well say it made no difference to the Emperor of Timbuctoo, in so far as there is one.

MR. S.—I don't quite see it.

THE M. H.—Of course you can't ; it is n't there.

SOCRATES.—If then it is not necessary that either familiarity or common interest are needed to provoke Love, but rather the contrary, since

“ Potter grudges potter, and bard bard,”
may it not be true that each man carries in his heart the image of a single Love, and that he never can unclasp the locket, as it were, which contains that image, till he meets its fleshly counterpart ?

PETER PAN.—If you please, Sir, if I 've never seen her before, how am I to know her when I find her ?

SOCRATES.—There, indeed, as the poet says, you

have struck a point. But how are we to suppose that any one learns anything? For if he has seen it, he knows it, and if he has not, how is he to recognize it?

A. B. W.—Quite so.

SOCRATES.—Come, then, do you wish that we should question this slave here, to discover how he learns that which he does learn?

A. B. W.—Let us try.

SOCRATES (*to SAM WELLER, drawing on a sheet of paper*).—Can you tell me what this is?

(*Draws a triangle.*)

SAM.—It looks rayther like a ham, Sir, as Henry the Eighth said, ven 'e saw his fourth wife.

SOCRATES.—That is not what I am asking. Or what would you call a ham, if it were without thickness, colour, taste, or smell?

SAM.—If I vos a vaiter, Sir, I should call it pork.

SOCRATES.—Come, come, this is a triangle, is it not?

SAM.—I'm villing to take anything from you, Sir, as the highvayman said to the guard, ven he held up the stage-coach.

SOCRATES.—Let the highwayman then remain as he is; do you assist me in my search. And first, what do you say, when you see a figure which turns round three corners so as to arrive at the point from which it started?

SAM.—I should rayther say that his last glass had gone the wrong vay with him.

SOCRATES.—I fear, my friend, that the white horse

of the myth has never carried you so far as to let you see the forms of all things at once.

SAM.—The Vite Horse at Ipsvich? I can't say as I vos ever taken like that; but I shall be wery partickler surprised if that 'ere wirtuous shepherd Stiggins does n't get 'em before long. (*A pause.*)

S. FRANCIS.—How peaceful is the night!

Dr. J.—Sir, it is as dull as the grave. When I was up at Pembroke, we were a nest of singing birds.

A. B. W.—Sir, Balliol has an even greater reputation now-a-days.

DR. J.—Balliol, Sir? I had not heard of that.

A. B. W.—It is a favourite College among us Scotsmen.

DR. J.—Then I hope, Sir, I may never hear of it again.

ARIST.—Let it then be laid down that Love is in its origin doubtful, but in its manner various. For many marriages have been made without oneness of souls; so it is likely that many onenesses have after all failed to come together.

CHORUS OF VICES.—

I want a little girl to love;
I suppose it has to rhyme with dove;
I very often flirt, but I'm really rather hurt
That I can't find any one to love.

CHORUS OF VIRTUES.—

Amore peccas? quidquid habes, age,
depone tutis auribus. A! miser,
quanta laborabas Charybdi,
digne puer meliore flamma.

Quae saga, quis te Thessalus Indicis
 magus venenis rite medebitur?
 sanare jam solum valebit,
 Sylva, tuae medicina menthae.

SOCRATES.—Has not the time come when we ought no longer to discuss the aspects of Love and its limits, but rather see if we cannot discover itself in itself what it is, and for this purpose relinquish no clue, till like good sleuth-hounds we have run the runaway Eros to earth?

S. H.—You will find all the clues in the left-hand top drawer of the large pigeon-hole desk. They are marked “Moriarty.”

THE CHAIRMAN.—Perhaps Mr. Hippoclides has some paronomasias to exude?

HIPPOC.—I really don’t know why you men want me to talk about this kind of thing. One can’t make jokes, either, when one’s talking Greats shop. I regard love as a natural thing, like eating or drinking. You don’t merely eat to fill your tummy; there is a spiritual side, which we call gastronomy, and there’s a spiritual side in the other game too. Excess in either case is bad for one. One should n’t mix one’s attachments any more than one’s liquors; and of course one probably has a favourite dish—a paropsonema, you know. It seems all right till you begin to border on licence.

SIR J. F.—30,000 in fourteen years! Oh, 'tis monstrous.*

* An allusion to the now forgotten Licensing Bill of 1908.

CICERO.—What! the heresy of the Cyrenaics, what! the false doctrine of the Epicureans, which to some persons indeed are pleasing as a cloak for lust, to wise and temperate men however are nauseating and repulsive; what! shall philosophy refused by the general consent of humanity be thus carelessly introduced into our argument? Shall chastity, shall self-respect, shall moderation, and again and again shall respectability, which I myself have practised assiduously during so many years, be taken from us? But, O Hippoclides, take from us Love, take from us family affection, take our children, pledges of connubiality, take the most sacred name and office of wife, take from us all pleasures and indulgences, but leave us, oh leave us our respectability! For I have long been persuaded that this is the only meaning of all those tastes and appetites known as sensuous, not that we should be able to exploit them to the full, but rather for the very purpose that restraining them and keeping them down we might acquire the reputation of being honest, to our own satisfaction, and so that we could safely cast vice in the teeth of our political opponents. And here I find myself in disagreement with the illustrious Caesar.

CH. II.—The lousy Puritan!

SAM.—That, sir, is what I should call a very good speech. Nothing like a few descriptive epithets, as the bargee said ven they asked him vere he vent to school.

PETER PAN.—What is the use of Love if you're not to fall into it?

S. FRAN.—Surely, masters, there is something better to be said for Sister Love. I have heard an old tale, with which, if it be not wearisome, I would fain tell you my meaning. For, as I was told, when the Creator left all the beasts in the garden of Paradise, He implanted in each a little of the Divine Love; wherewith the creatures praised Him, not knowing why, and took delight in the propagating of their kind, in ignorance that this delight sprang from the drawing together of those two sparks of the Very Flame of Desire. And it came to pass, after a time, that the beasts grew jealous of Man, because he was the fairest, and had most delight. And when he would not hear them, the serpent (for he was the most misshapen of all) tempted them to eat of the tree of Knowledge. And behold, when they ate thereof (the history of which is set down in the first book of Moses), Man found out that the joy he took in Love was not as the joy of eating or drinking, which are but lusts of the flesh, and he recognized the spark of Love which was in him from the first. And from that time men have never been content to love with their bodies, as the beasts, for they knew Love to be of the soul; yet they might not join soul to soul by reason of the encumbrance of the mortal part. So ever since, evil men, that know not self-discipline, have tried to drown that spiritual flame in excess of fleshly lust; but true lovers still draw together and kiss with their lips, knowing all the while that their desire is to kiss with the lips of the

soul, and confessing “ quia hospites sunt et peregrini super terram.”

PETER PAN.—I thought a kiss was a thing to keep needles out of your hand !

DR. J.—Sir, it is a thing to bring a sword into your heart.

HIPPOC.—By the way, have you heard what Adam’s telephone number was ?

THE M. H.—You ought n’t to speak till you’re spoken to.

SIR ROGER (*ignoring the last remark*).—I agree with the Reverend gentleman in much that he has said. His meaning, if I apprehend him aright, is that all Love has a spiritual principle or element in it ; and further, that the spiritual part, like the physical, is eager to join itself with another soul, though it know such union to be impossible. But while I agree with his Psychologick, I hope he will not accuse me of courtesy if I take exception to his Teleology. He would have us believe that all the refinement of affection, all the aetheriality of the human Passion, is not the direct gift of an All-Wise Creator, but a Machination on the part of our enemy the Devil. His attitude is that of Laocoon : “ Timeo Danaos et dona ferentes.” Yet this apperception of a heavenly or celestial meaning I take to be the Charter of Humanity, and the justification of the existence of that Being, Whom atheists and agnosticks deny. And hence I derive the fact, that Love, which is a virtue of the soul, can be practis’d like other

Virtues ; we do not, like beasts, become helpless as soon as we see one of the other sex, but rather consider the object of our Attentions, Whether she be worthy, Whether within the prohibited degrees, What fortune she possesses, and so forth. After such examination, we allow our love to have its way, and encourage ourselves to overlook any defects that may at first sight have excited our Distaste. Even to the last we keep some kind of reserve, and do not ratify the decree of our Sentiments till she have pronounc'd her consent ; that if she be unwilling, we may be able to aver truthfully, That the refusal causes us no great Disappointment ; thereby saving our own dignity and her feelings at once.

SAM.—And if you found she vos a vidder, you 'd do well to emigrate without sayin' anythin' more about it.

MRS. M.—I little thought, gentlemen, that I should come to this meeting to have nasturtiums cast on my unfortunate position as the relic of Mr. Malaprop !

S. H.—Excuse me, Madam, but a lady who is actually encouraging the advances of a lover under an assumed name can hardly feel aggrieved at a casual allusion.

MRS. M.—And what if I have cherished an unrequited affliction ? What if I have indulged a passion malodoreuse ? Are you a wizard or an oculist, that you penetrate my family Arcadia, and tell the company that I marmalade under an assumed name ? There are many lovers who before now have assumed an Abed-nego.

S. H.—A long shot, Watson ! Allow me to draw your attention to the brooch the lady is wearing, marked “L.L.” It is new, hence it does not belong to her first courtship.

SOCRATES.—And if such a person come into our city, bewitching us by discovering secrets, and bringing vexatious accusations, we shall compliment him as a truly divine and wonderful personage, and having anointed his head with oil, whether Tatcho or some other variety, we shall send him on to another city.

As to the question of Love, I know not what I shall say. For I have suffered a most unusual thing ; to wit that the other speakers should not all have contended for obvious untruths. My Pythagorean friend has said much that seems to me to be true. For the soul, when it has passed through the period of ten thousand years, is carried round the circumference of the heavens at a furious pace, together with other cars without number—

[S. H. (*dreamily*).—Blaze at the tyres, Watson ! They've no right to travel without.]

(*The whole party gradually go to sleep as S. proceeds.*) —and each soul that remembers those beautiful things which it has seen, not beautiful at one time and not at another, but true essence essentially existing itself by itself for all time, whensoever they see any semblance on earth of the heavenly beauty, rejoice and become enamoured of it, and are astonished at its divinity. And having seen Beauty itself without accidents of any kind, they will recog-

nize it wherever they see it; for it will be equal in respect of clearness in all its copies, just as a thing printed is in all its copies equally distinct.

ALL. Good heavens !*

SOCRATES.—And hence we shall no longer consent to keep to a single love, but rather worship it whensoever we see it, and try to engender it mutually in the object of our regard. To love one is indeed like admiring one wise man and not another, or worshiping one god and not several.

CHORUS OF VICES.—

I can't exactly count them, for they're all so much alike,

And each would like to marry me; they always call me Mike:

They're all so very pretty that I don't know what to do,

How can I marry one of them, and jilt the twenty-two?

CHORUS OF VIRTUES.—Can this type-writer write Greek?

MR. S.—No.

CHORUS OF VIRTUES.—Then I shan't say any more.

PETER PAN.—I want to say how grateful I feel to the old gentleman who looks like Smee for explaining what Love really is. Of course it's awfully fascinating, but—

SOCRATES.—But what especially?

* The copies of this dialogue used in the original and only reading were typewritten and duplicated by an amateur; and some of them were rather wanting in distinctness. Still, the Society need not have been rude about it.

PETER PAN.—Do you say Love is physical, or entirely spiritual?

SOCRATES.—Nothing else than this.

PETER PAN.—What, then, to give a person a thimble, is not this physical?

SOCRATES.—Certainly.

PETER PAN.—And parents thimble their children, do they not? As for instance our mother Wendy thimbles me?

SOCRATES.—Yes.

PETER PAN.—Then the love of a mother is physical?

SOCRATES.—Least of all.

PETER PAN.—It appears then, in spite of what we said, that a thimble may be the sign of a spiritual love?

SOCRATES.—It appears so.

PETER PAN.—Let us look at it in this way: Is not a thimble the expression of a desire to be close to a person?

SOCRATES.—What however?

PETER PAN.—And spiritual love is an appreciation of the reflection of perfect beauty in a single person?

SOCRATES.—At least we said so.

PETER PAN.—And does that make us want to give them a thimble?

SOCRATES.—By the dog, the nurse-maid, I think so.

PETER PAN.—What? Does the man who admires the waterfall on that account throw himself in?

SOCRATES.—He does not run the risk.

PETER PAN.—And the man who admires the volcano, go and touch the flames?

SOCRATES.—No.

PETER PAN.—Then why should admiration or reverence for beauty cause us to go as close as possible?

SOCRATES.—I am blessed, as the saying is, if I know.

PETER PAN.—Then there can be spiritual love, which is not merely admiration of the beautiful?

SOCRATES.—I suppose so.

PETER PAN.—It is not then necessary to love spiritually every beautiful person we may meet? And that doodle-doo over there* need n't love all the twenty-three?

SOCRATES.—It seems to follow from our admissions.

PETER PAN.—Of course I don't know much about these things, but I think Love is a great big adventure, and if you do it over and over again you may have more experience, but it's not nearly so exciting. And I'm going to marry Wendy!

SOCRATES (*to THE MARCH HARE*).—What shall we say then, O Lagos? Have we anything to say against this argument, or do we submit?

THE M. H.—You've got a smut on your nose.

THE CHAIRMAN.—Gentlemen, time is advancing. In a short while the clock will be groaning in the

* At the performance, the Chorus of Vices executed his part in a life-like imitation of the common and rather throaty gramophone.

long-drawn agonies of a quarter-past nine. The gated aristocrat prefers the scrutiny of the porter to a circuitous and Satanic inroad on the paradisiac gardens of St. John's. The politician will be remembering, too late, the flesh-pots of the Canning or the revolutionary orgies of the Russell. The don attempts to speed the departure of the High-Table guest by subtle allusions to efflagitant pupils or long neglected Collection papers. May I make my own the words of the preacher: "There is a time to keep silence, and a time to speak"? From what I have said you will see that the occasion is of the former class.

ARIST.—Whether, however, a man and a woman love each other in the same way mutually, or whether he in one way and she in another, I have a pretty long speech to make.

CH. II.—Gentlemen, I vow I have never till now theoriz'd for a whole hour. Let us be something short in our conclusion.

HIPPOC.—I do bar any more Greats shop; the place has been an absolute Megalopolion for hours.

SIR J. F.—And I, gentles, have a marvellous great craving for refreshment.

SAM.—It seems to me that the next time this 'ere distinguished gathering gets together to discuss Pan-Anglican subjects, ve might have a little friendly talk about drink. Ve should be more at home arguing there, as the young feller said ven his friend told him to go and tell that to the—

CHORUS OF VIRTUES.—Hush! Hush!

SIR ROGER.—With regard to the mutual feelings of a man and a woman, I have often felt that the chief glory of her love was Sincerity, and of his, Constancy. For the woman is little tempted to find another attachment, but the man pleases himself. And this Virtue is specially prais'd in a poem quoted by the illustrious Mr. Walton, in his Book of Fishes :

“ But contrary, the constant Cantharus
 Lives ever constant to his faithful spouse ;
 In nuptial duties spending his whole life,
 Never loves any but his own dear wife.”

CHORUS OF VICES.—

The fish that swim in the stream, tra la,
 Have nothing to do with the case ;
 My wife has a horrible dream, tra la,
 Of a grand matriarchal régime, tra la ;
 She’s in Holloway now for a space,
 She’s in Holloway now for a space ;
 And that’s what I mean when I say that I wish
 My wife was n’t blessed with a face like a fish !
 Tra la la la la, tra la la la la,
 My wife’s got a face like a fish.

ARIST.—But come now, we must admit that a father loves his son in one way, and the son his father in another. For things affect one another not in the same way, as in the case of the punt which ran into the eight.

MR. S.—The constancy of the man is his desire for private property. The fervency of the woman is

her desire to be possessed. Being the weaker creature, she likes what she can get.

THE M. H.—Is that a joke?

MR. S.—Look here, are you writing this, or am I? You seem to think you were meant to be a Natural Man; but you're only a natural.

THE M. H.—And you seem to think you were meant to be a superman; but you're only a super.

(MR. S. faints in his chair. The rest crowd round him.)

S. H.—Quick, Watson, brandy!

(He turns out the light. A moment later it is turned up again, and HOLMES is discovered drawing a document out of ARISTOTLE'S pocket.)

S. H.—Here, gentlemen, I have seventeen separate arguments on the nature of love, which this gentlemen has stolen from Socrates! (Sensation.)

S. H. (continuing).—If you would just blow your whistle, Watson, Lestrade will be here in a minute or so, and we can hand our man over to the proper authorities.

ARIST.—Let so much be said—

S. H.—I have to warn you that anything you say will be used as evidence against you.

MRS. M.—I am sure we are all very grateful to you, Mr. Holmes, for the defection of this plot. May I offer you a dish of tea to-morrow afternoon?

S. H.—With the greatest pleasure, Madam. My friend, Dr. Watson, usually accompanies me—

MRS. M.—I hope he will come too.

A. B. W.—I think I could get my neighbour to take on my practice. He is accustomed to it by now.

MRS. M. (*to Dr. J.*).—Will you come too, Doctor?

DR. J.—Madam, I shall be delighted.

MRS. M.—Then we shall be a marron glacé.

CICERO.—I hope Mr.—er—Smee will recover his property. Gentlemen, good-night.

S. FRANCIS.—Truly, S. James is wise in his counsel concerning the tongue. We had better have spent this evening in our beds.

SOCRATES.—And so I sat for the rest of the night drinking liqueurs in great comfort, while the others went home. And in the morning, having shaved my beard as my custom is, I kept a roller in the front porch.

THE CHAIRMAN.—The House will now adjourn.

THE END.



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